

US rolls out free app for alerts on vehicle recalls

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In this Jan. 24, 2020 file photo, early rush hour traffic rolls along I-10 in Phoenix. The U.S. government's road safety agency is offering a smartphone app that will alert drivers if their vehicles are recalled. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration was to roll out the app for Android and Apple phones on Thursday, Aug. 27. (AP Photo/Ross D. Franklin, File)

The U.S. government's road safety agency is offering a smartphone app that will alert drivers if their vehicles are recalled.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration was scheduled to roll out the [free app](#) for both Android and Apple phones Thursday.

Owners key in or scan their 17-digit vehicle identification number, and the app will search the agency's database for recalls. If there is one, the app will send an alert, the agency says.

People also can add child seats, trailers and tires, and the app will check those for recalls.

Private services such as Carfax already offer similar apps for vehicle recalls, but this is a first for NHTSA, which is part of the U.S. Department of Transportation. Owners already can go to <https://www.nhtsa.gov/recalls> and check the NHTSA database for recalls.

Vehicle owners can get the app through the Google Play Store by searching for "SaferCar." It was to be available later Thursday in the Apple Store. Full information about the app can be found at <https://www.nhtsa.gov/safercar-app>.

The safety agency says vehicle information is kept on the owner's phone and no [personal information](#) is shared with the government.

"The SaferCar app allows you to store your information locally on your device, and then the app goes to work to inform you of recalls as they occur," NHTSA Deputy Administrator James Owens said in a statement.

NHTSA says that one in four vehicles now on the road has an unrepaired recall, which is a safety risk. Automakers must fix safety recall problems

at no cost to owners.

Last year, 53 million vehicles, car seats, tires and equipment were recalled, according to the agency.

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